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Editorial Clips

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Editorial Clips

[The following editorials and comments provide an insight into the philosophy and personality of Don L. Berry. THE EDITOR.]

December 22, 1949

GREATEST CHARACTER OR BIGGEST FAKE

Next Sunday the world celebrates the birthday of the greatest character of all history. If not that, then he was the biggest fake.

If he was a fake, it is strange that a fake should have influenced mankind more than any other single individual. If a fake, it is unbelievable that all his influence has been for good, for the happiness and the betterment of mankind.

If he was a fake, how come that where he was worshiped, there the status of women has risen to its highest standards, that little children enjoy the greatest privileges and the widest opportunities? If a fake, how is it that people laugh most, who live in lands where his name is revered?

Napoleon said: "Alexander the Great, Charlemagne and I have founded empires based on force. Theirs have disintegrated and mine will. But Jesus of Nazareth founded an empire on love, and today, 1800 years after his death, millions of men would still die for him."

If pseudo-scientists would belittle him, let them tell us what science has accomplished in lands where his influence has not penetrated. We may not understand him, but he is real, as real today as on the first Christmas.

Jesus had a half brother, or a cousin, named James, the author of the Epistle of James in the New Testament.

If Jesus had been a fake, James would have known it. Even if James had followed Jesus in life merely to enjoy the fruits of his deception, it is not conceivable that he would have been faithful to the memory and the teachings of Jesus for thirty-two years after the crucifixion, merely from loyalty to a fake. Loyalty to Jesus was not attractive from selfish purposes in those days. Loyalty to him meant suffering and sacrifice, and often, death. It was thirty-two years after Jesus' death before James wrote his epistle. He did not maintain that loyalty to a faker for thirty-two years. If Jesus had been a fake, James would have known.

In 1949 the presence of Jesus is real. We may not comprehend him, we may not understand his power; but we can look around us and see what he has done.

CHIGGERS AND RASPBERRIES

July 21, 1955

Don Murphy, editor of *Wallaces Farmer*, says that at his place it has been "a good year for chiggers and a poor year for raspberries."

We are sorry for Don and his overproduction of bug-dust and underproduction of fruit.

At our house we have had just one chigger — not positively identified. From two rows of raspberries, red, about thirty feet long we have probably given away at least a dozen quarts to relatives and friends, had all two of us could eat three times a day for three weeks, have frozen thirty-six pints, made at least forty glasses of jellies and jam, and the refrigerator is still carrying enough for several days' consumption as the pickings decrease.

From our standpoint, it has been a great year for raspberries. We have been happy about it. The Better Seven Eighths did practically all the picking, absolutely all the jelly making, prepared the berries for freezing, and sorted out the big ones for friends and relatives.

To our own credit we can boast that we carried the berries for freezing to the locker plant and furnished pasture for the one chigger. Were it not for that pasture deal, our conscience would hardly let us sleep at night.

THE GREATNESS OF ALVIN C. YORK

February 5, 1920

Alvin C. York, "the best fighter in the world," the Tennessee hill soldier, who was singled out by Marshall Foch as the best individual fighter of the war, is a moral as well as a physical hero. Bombarded by movie companies, vaudeville managers and publishers to commercialize his hero record, he has refused them all, according to the Chicago papers, and is devoting his time to lecturing for the "Alvin C. York Foundation" for the benefit of the hill children of Tennessee. His purpose is to raise \$300,000 for this fund. He might be a millionaire in his own right, except — he has too high a sense of honor. Questioned by a reporter as to why he refused all offers of personal gain, he replied: "Friend, I couldn't. Why, it's jest a sellin' my honor for a pot of gold." If this be true, here is a man who is really "big," not with that kind of bigness that accumulates money, writes itself up in magazines and proclaims itself from billboards, but the genuine, unselfish, God-fearing, back-to-nature, Abe Lincoln type of bigness. There is more hope for the future in the sparsely settled hills of Tennessee than in the congested cliff dwellings of Manhattan Island.

NEEDED — A BRANNEN PLAN FOR BARBERS

March 9, 1950

The cure for many of our social troubles has been found. What we need is a Brannen plan for barbers instead of for farmers. The *Reader's Digest* gives the tip-off.

In the February number it tells of a business man who had worked under such pressure he was on the verge of a nervous break-down, in fact had begun to break.

He went to a psychiatrist who treated him every afternoon for three months and submitted a bill for \$1,500. The patient looked at it and said:

"Well, Doctor, I think it is worth it. You surely made a man out of me."

"Oh," said the doctor, "I didn't do much for you, but that half hour of rest every day after lunch has done wonders."

When shaves were a dime, men went to the barber shop two or three times a week, some of them every day. They had fifteen to twenty minutes of rest and relaxation. Some chatted with the barber. Some cracked jokes with the loafers. Some slept through the shave. But, however they took it, the shave was a needed rest.

Now that shaves are fifty cents to a dollar, according to the location and wage level in the community, hardly anybody goes to the barber for a shave. Instead we use a buzzing electric shaver, or dash some lather or prepared shaving dope on our faces and whack the whiskers off with a hoe in the shortest possible time, listening for Miranda to call breakfast, or perhaps for the whistle of a suburban train, or the honk of the auto that picks us up with a group to be driven to work.

No more the afternoon rest when the barber soothes our aching brows with hot towels and quietly and methodically takes off the whiskers with gentle and soothing strokes.

Now then, let's put shaves back to a dime and let the government pay the barbers forty to ninety cents deficit on each shave. Let the shaves sell on the open market and the government pay the difference. Then we will all start being shaved in the barber shop again, nerves will relax, the burden of our mental hospitals will be relieved, taxes

lowered, productive capacity increased, the government therefore receiving more revenue from income tax.

Employers will be more patient with John L. Lewis and there will be no more coal strikes.

It is just as simple as that. What this country needs is a Brannen plan for barbers.

SOME THOUGHTS FROM GRASSHOPPERS

September 29, 1955

Ever try to step on a grasshopper and have him jump about four feet, right out from under your toe just as it was due to come down and put him out of business? Don't be discouraged, you can get him and it is an interesting game, you against the grasshopper. You may think he is out of your class, but he isn't.

He will jump away and light somewhere nearby. Step up and try to mash him again so he can't eat any more corn or soybeans. Away he goes, right out from under your shoe, as if your coming down on him only projected him into space.

Be patient. Try him once more. If he gets away this time, it will be by the skin of his teeth. He may not make it. He is slowed down noticeably. Try it the fourth time, and the chances are he won't even try to jump. He's tired.

When you see a bunch of grasshoppers grasshopping about, it looks as if all of them are grasshopping at one time. But pick out one grasshopper and pursue him, and you will find he is not as longwinded as you might think. About three grasshops in succession and he is ready to resign from grasshopping.

If we could take grasshoppers one at a time, we could soon rid the country of grasshoppers. It is their mass attack that makes them formidable.

Remember how we used to walk down chickens? Try to corner a chicken and catch it in the hen-pasture and you

get tired and feel ridiculous; but the chicken seems to stand it all right. Pick out your chicken and follow him at a walk. Don't run him or he will fly to the other side of the fence, and while you climb the fence, he rests. But keep right on his tail at a steady walk. Don't try to get too close to him; just keep him moving. In three minutes he will be petered out and hunkered down in a fence corner waiting for you to pick him up. He won't even squawk when you lay him down to chop off his head.

If you have problems worrying you, don't try to solve them all at once. Take one problem at a time and walk it down. By evening you won't have as many problems as you had in the morning.

Grasshoppers, chickens, knotty problems. Walk them down one at a time.

When we started this we were thinking only of the funny way of a grasshopper. A moral lesson was farthest from our thoughts. Then we thought of the chicken. And from the chicken the whole thing ran into a little lesson from human nature as irresistibly as the water all runs to the sea.

If you don't like moral lessons, back up and quit with the grasshoppers.

THREE BELLYFULLS A DAY

August 4, 1955

Wages, employment, and business are at an all time high. But the farmer is not sharing in that prosperity, with eggs and poultry low, and hogs going down. Wonder if the labor and business tycoons remember that back in the 20's everything was going fine for everybody but the farmer, and then, bang, October, 1929, the bottom dropped out.

If the farmer has money he will buy the products of industry to almost any extent. If industry produces two cars

with the same labor with which it formerly produced one, the farmer will buy the extra car, if he has the money.

But when the farmer produces two bushels of corn with the same labor with which he formerly produced one, industry and labor buy no more than three bellyfulls a day, the same as when food cost more. Reducing the price or cost of production of food does not create a greater sale. Three bellyfulls a day is the limit.

When labor and business dream of lower cost for food, they are only dreaming of cutting off the best customer they have. It has been pretty well proven by statistics that when farm income falls below the total factory payrolls of the country, trouble ensues.

SHOULD WE FOLLOW THE BLUE EAGLE OVER THE CLIFF?

October 13, 1933

The most patriotic thing that rural trading towns like Indianola could do at this time, both in their own interest and in the ultimate success of the Roosevelt program, might be to pull down their Blue Eagles and serve notice on the NRA that they propose to go it alone.

The *Record* has held at all times, and still believes, that it was never the intention of President Roosevelt that the rural trading centers be "taken for a ride;" but that is precisely what is going to happen, and the farmer is going along with them, unless some backfire is started to keep entrenched industry and organized labor from monopolizing the whole show. There is nothing politically antagonistic to the administration in this statement. As the *Record* has said before, the Roosevelt administration stands in danger of being scuttled by the same crew that put the Hoover administration in bad order. They dominated the situation then, and utterly failed to bring any stable prosperity. Their lopsided reasoning will do no better under a Democratic president.

Organized labor and big business know little or nothing of the problems of the farm or the rural towns, and they care less. They are primarily interested in getting food as cheaply as they can. In getting it, they do not care whether the farmer goes up or goes down. Theoretically, they have no objection to his success, but it is secondary to their own plans.

The NRA as at present set up is killing business in small towns. It does not fit the situation. The whole force of NRA is being centered on big business with its billions of reserves and on organized labor, which has no capital investments, no stable interest even in the business by which it makes a living.

The *Record* is taking no sides in the contest between capital and labor. Our sympathies tend toward the laborers. Big business fostered the present crisis. But there are several million of us who are neither big capitalists nor organized laborers. We have a different problem, and we have a right to live.

The great mass of home owning, farming people, and independent business men, who are both laborers and capitalists in one, therefore conservative and stable, are being ignored. They are getting words of comfort, but they amount to nothing. Next week, or next month, or after Christmas, something will come our way, we are told; but in the meantime the whole stress of NRA is being laid on big business and organized labor. When their troubles are ironed out, it will be the same old story it has been in the past — the rural regions will be squeezed between them. Whatever is needed to balance the scales between labor and capital will be taken out of the middle classes unless they make themselves heard.

Right now a battle is going on in Washington in which the life of the country weeklies and small dailies is at stake. The big dailies and the million dollar job printing

establishments have unlimited funds with which to maintain a lobby in Washington. Union labor has its perpetually organized lobby of trained fighters. Against these the small printers and publishers are fighting for their lives.

If the demands of the unions and the big fellows go through, it will be necessary for establishments like The Record and Tribune Company to charge practically double for their services. But nothing has been done to give our patrons the money with which to pay the bill. The workers in The Record and Tribune shop do not want to ask the customers to pay such prices that they can live on a thirty or thirty-two hour week. But they will be forced to it, or close shop, or defy the code, if such a code is recommended to the president by the administrator as now seems probable.

What is true of printing and publishing is true of most other lines of business. If the small cities and towns sit supinely by, quietly and patriotically taking what is doped out for them, the president will never be permitted to know that the codes recommended to him, as the result of the wire pulling of the trained lobbyists, are ruinous and confiscatory in their effect on the rural trading centers. He will sign the codes and they will become law.

The small towns cannot afford to keep lobbies in Washington, but they have the power in their own hands to make a noise out on the prairies that can be heard in Washington. *The Record* is ready, together with other business men of Indianola, to pull down its Blue Eagles and carry them back to the Post Office. We could do it with the conviction that we were doing the most patriotic thing possible for the success of the Roosevelt program. It would be much better to start the rebellion now than to wait until the codes become law, and then being in the dilemma of either closing shop or breaking the law.

The Record and Tribune Company has not reduced the

number of its employees since 1929. Of the nine regular employees on the payroll then, seven are still employed. If every business had done as well, there would be no depression.

The Record and Tribune Company was one of the first establishments in Indianola to sign the president's agreement, and is living up to it. But it cannot keep it up unless much more money comes into the hands of farmers surrounding this town. A mere parity with 1910-1914 prices will not be enough to keep us going on a thirty hour week. It would hardly do it on a forty hour week.

Our situation is the situation of 90 per cent of the country newspapers and small town business men of Iowa. Is it our duty to sit around in smug acquiescence, comforting ourselves with the thought that we are patriotic, when we know that in Washington, supposedly the seat of American patriotism, we are being systematically lobbied out of business?

Must the independent businessman and the small town play the role of the boy who "stood on the burning deck?"

August 9, 1922

The Bloomfield Republican and Democrat uses a slug head to tell of the invention by a former Bloomfield man of a "cow tail tie" to prevent cows switching their tails while being milked in fly time. Knowing what we do of the disposition of a cow to switch the milker with her feet when prevented from switching flies with her tail, we dare say *The Republican and Democrat* will not print the remarks of the first purchaser of the "cow tail tie."

It used to be said: "Many a girl wears a sailor hat who never owned a yacht." This is brought down to date by saying that not all people work who wear blue jeans.

ONLY THE RICH CAN AFFORD SUCH LUXURY

Only a few days ago we were riding on a country road in Warren County. We looked a quarter of a mile across a hollow and saw a freshly plowed field which had been in pasture forty years. The furrows ran right up and down the hillside so that the rain can have the best chance in the world to start moving that field down to the Gulf of Mexico. The land belonged to one of the wealthiest and most successful farmers in Warren County. We assume that only the rich can afford the luxury of giving their top soil a new home in the south.

Every time we mail a letter now, it takes the interest on one dollar for a year.

They used to call them "Mother Hubbards." Then they refined them a little and called them "wrappers." Now they call them "sacks." But the same old definition remains accurate: "Something that covers everything and touches nothing."

We hear it said that there are families who will spend from \$50 up on flowers for a wedding, and hand the preacher five bucks.

One of the greatest needs of the Christian churches of America is aid societies which can put on dinners without making more noise in the kitchen than the speaker of the evening can make in the main dining hall.

Over at Pella they have organized a co-operative burial association which is going great guns. We have known folks around here who would never co-operate in anything until then.

THE FARMER'S CROP

IS GOOD SECURITY

Hold Your Own Grain until the Market is Right.

Why let the speculator have the advance?

The time is past when the farmer must throw his wheat or corn on the market immediately after it is harvested in order to raise a little money for immediate needs, taking the low price which usually follows the harvesting of any crop and seeing the speculator get the benefit of the rise which usually comes later.

Any of the banks whose names appear at the bottom of this advertisement will accept the crop of any reputable farmer as security for a loan to a considerable portion of its value, when accompanied by a legal certificate of inspection and sealing under the Iowa Warehousing law as set forth in Secs. 9752 to 9805 of the Code of Iowa, 1924.

The Iowa Warehousing law makes it possible for the farmer to draw at the bank on his grain in the bin the same as the elevator man can draw a sight draft on a bill of lading or the Chicago grain man borrow on a warehouse receipt for grain in a terminal elevator.

Attorney Howard J. Clark and Senator Brookhart spent two hours at Sandyville last Saturday explaining to the farmers of Warren county that this is the kind of service they need. The Indianola banks want to tell them in a few words that this is the service they have.

Through the efforts of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation these provisions were incorporated into the Iowa law by the 40th General Assembly with the support of Hon. John A. Storey, representative from Warren county, an Indianola banker. The State Secretary of Agriculture has made necessary arrangements and appointed the legally authorized warehousing committee and official sealers.

Grain to be sealed under the law must be stored in a good crib or bin, well protected from weather, and with adequate provision for ventilation to prevent spoilage. If you have grain to seal, apply to the county agent for the services of the official sealer, who will issue a warehouse receipt. Then bring your receipt to the bank and get your loan, which will provide you with money for immediate needs. When the market advances you can sell the grain, pay off the loan, and have all the advance in price for yourself instead of having it go to the speculator.

Yours for keeping the money at home,

Warren County State Bank

First National Bank

Peoples Trust and Savings Bank

Worth Savings Bank

Indianola Banking Company

An Advertisement That Won Widespread Acclaim.